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EDITORIAL NOTES

With this issue the tenth volume of the *Elementary School Teacher* closes. There are three series of articles which will be continued in the next volume, namely the series on natural history by Professor Caldwell, the series on agricultural education by Professor Davis, and the series on history of education by Professor Parker. The series by Professor Sargent is completed in this number and will, after some revision and enlargement, appear in the form of a book.

It will not be out of place for us to comment editorially on these series. Professor Sargent has shown with great detail the importance of systematic sequent work in a sphere of school activity which has suffered because of lack of careful organization. Professor Parker has struck out in a line of historical studies which will contribute new life to the history of education. This history has too often been abstract, dealing only with educational theory. Here is the practical side of school method brought to light in a most suggestive way. The articles on geography by Mr. Phillips may very properly be regarded as part of this series. Mr. Phillips' work grew out of one of Professor Parker's courses. When all of our school subjects are understood in the light of their history, we shall be very much more intelligent in estimating the value of our current reforms.

Professor Davis has brought together a body of information which makes it possible to follow the development of interest in agricultural education in all directions. Those who are introducing courses in agriculture and those who wish to secure material to guide them in the discussion of this subject will find in Professor Davis' papers a summary of the whole movement not available elsewhere. In subsequent papers Professor Davis will focus all these studies of current activities on the problems of the organization of courses for various types of schools.

Professor Caldwell will contribute further numbers to the

series on natural history showing how this subject can be made increasingly systematic in the upper grades. The problem of organizing school studies of nature broadly and at the same time in a fashion to satisfy the demand of preparation for maturer science is one of the most urgent current problems in elementary education. The solution of this problem is rendered the more difficult because the material is so varied in different environments. Professor Caldwell is giving concrete examples and a broad range of suggestions for the use of other special specimens.

This year's issues have emphasized the importance of scientific studies of educational problems. The papers on elimination are among the notable contributions of the journal to the educational literature of the year. Professor Dearborn shows that our schools lose the high-grade students as well as the low, thereby making it clear that mental deficiency is not the cause which explains the withdrawal of children from these schools. Mr. Staples showed that far-reaching social and economic results follow elimination; that later success in life is intimately related to the period of schooling. Miss Schmitt and Professor Thorndike contribute the detail studies of schools which alone will show the exact extent of retardation.

Several of the papers, notably the papers by Mr. Courtis, show the value of minute comparisons of classes and methods. Such papers ought to increase in number, for it is only through such studies that teachers can criticize school work on impersonal, objective grounds.

Doubtless readers of this journal have availed themselves of the guidance of Miss Warren's list of educational articles which appears in every number. If not, special attention should be given to this unique current bibliography of educational discussions. It is hoped that in time this may be expanded so as to indicate briefly what is in the more significant articles. As the list stands now, however, it is worth posting in every principal's office as a means to progress. No teacher can keep alive without reading broadly. Here is a librarian's contribution to the teachers' continued professional study. It is valuable in its immediate function and it is also valuable as an example to those who for

any purpose are interested in the preparation of series of educational readings.

Space does not permit reference to each of the articles. Two general facts must be obvious to every reader. First, the papers all contain facts. We need more explicit accounts of what is going on everywhere in educational institutions. Experience goes to waste in limitless quantities. Anyone who will send facts about his or her work will find here an open forum. Secondly, this journal is not the exponent of any single school. All that is best in the practice and experience of the Elementary School of the University of Chicago will sooner or later find its way into the pages of this journal, but contributions from other schools are earnestly solicited provided only that these contributions set forth in clear perspective actual practices and sifted results. The time for mere inspirational reading in education is over. Facts are what we need. This journal stands for empiricism in education, for clear statement of practices and very little speculation; for systematic, detailed expositions of course of study rather than pious hopes for educational reform.